

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 , 9 and 10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4-6, 9 and 10 are amended and claims 7 and 8 are canceled, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. No new matter is added.

On page 3, the Office Action indicates that claims 3-6, 9 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates the indication of allowability of claims 3-6, but submits that claim 1, the claim from which claims 3-6 depend, is allowable for the reasons set forth below. Claims 9 and 10 are rewritten in independent form including all of the features of base claim 7, and claim 7 is canceled. Thus, independent claims 9 and 10 are allowable.

On page 2, the Office Action reject claims 1, 2, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Burton et al. (Burton), U.S. Patent No. 5,281,984, in view of Blenkle, U.S. Patent No. 5,220,362. The rejection of canceled claims 7 and 8 is moot. The rejection of claims 1 and 2 is respectfully traversed.

Applicant's claim 1 recites an optometric apparatus for subjectively examining a visual function of an examinee's eye, including a pair of right and left lens chamber units, each including a test window and optical elements to be changeably disposed in the test window; a support unit which supports the lens chamber units so that the units may be converged; a near vision examination chart to be disposed in front of the test window at a changeable distance from the test window; and an illumination unit which irradiates illumination light to the near vision examination chart, the illumination unit being provided in each lens chamber unit. The combination of Burton and Blenkle fails to disclose or suggest all of these features.

Burton teaches an optometric apparatus comprising a pair of right and left eye batteries 12, 14, each including viewing tubes 40, 42 within the respective batteries 12, 14, and a light guide system placed in each of the right and left eye batteries 12, 14 (Figs. 1-3;

col. 4, lines 57-60; col. 5, lines 9-15; and col. 6, lines 41-61). However, the light guide system disclosed by Burton is designed to illuminate an scales 74, 76, cylindrical power windows 70, 72, spherical power windows 52, 54 and others to make setting values, or scales, easy to view (col. 6, line 41 to col. 7, line 58). Thus, the apparatus of Burton is not directed to irradiate light to a near vision examination chart disposed in front of a test window. On the other hand, Applicant's claim 1 recites an illumination unit which irradiates illumination light to the near vision examination chart, and the near vision examination chart to be disposed in front of the test window. Therefore, Burton fails to disclose or suggest any technique wherein even when the lens chamber units are converged according to the position of the near vision examination chart moved in a backward or forward direction, the near vision examination chart can be illuminated appropriately. Thus, Burton fails to disclose or suggest all of the features of Applicant's claim 1.

Blenkle does not account for the deficiencies of Burton and suffers from its own deficiencies with respect to Applicant's claim 1. Blenkle teaches an optometric apparatus having an illumination means 20 to illuminate a reading card 109 disposed in a reading card holder 110. The reading card holder 110 is secured to a rod 106 attached to a ophthalmic refractor 100 (Figs. 2, 3; col. 4, lines 40-49 and 65-68). However, the illumination means 20 of Blenkle is a component attached to reading card holder 110. Thus, the illumination means 20 is not provided in each lens chamber unit, as recited in Applicant's claim 1. Rather, the illumination means 20 is movable together with the reading card 109 in a backward and forward direction along the rod 106. Accordingly, Blenkle provides redundant components between the ophthalmic refractor 100 and the reading card 109 and does not reduce obstructions to the reading card 109 which may adversely effect on eye examinations, which are problems in the prior art discussed in Applicant's disclosure at page 2, lines 1-21. Thus, Blenkle also fails to disclose or suggest all of the features of Applicant's claim 1.

Therefore, Burton nor Blenkle, individually or in combination disclose or suggest all of the features of Applicant's claim 1. Further claim 2 incorporates the features of claim 1, the combination fails to disclose or suggest the features of claim 2 for at least the reasons discussed above as well as for the additional features found therein.

Thus, it is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 and 2, in addition to allowable claims 3-6, 9 and 10 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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